

in that remark, but one may add that Zola is easier to read and follow than many of his brother realists. Fifty pages of the pyrotechnics of the Goncourts — the labour connected with which killed the younger one, Jules, as Edmond often acknowledged — may interest the reader, but after a few hundred of them one often feels dizzy and fagged. The brothers Margueritte, who proceeded from the Goncourts, have sometimes carried the passion for literary fireworks even further. Zola was quite unable to read their chief work, "Le D&astre." "I have taken up that book a dozen times," he said one day to the present writer, "but on each occasion, after picking my way through a few pages, I have had to put it down. There is some trick of style in every sentence. One is never allowed a moment's rest. After each of those trials it has seemed to me as if my head would split"

On another occasion he remarked: "Nothing changes more frequently than the fashion in literary style. That is why so many books, although often not very old, are quite unreadable. Our *decadents* insist on polishing and repolishing their style till their writings become raere jewellery work, which will please nobody a few years hence. I myself dabbled in such work formerly. When it does not run to any great length it amuses one, and it may interest the critic, even please the reader, like

something fresh and
novel. But the latter soon sickens of it. He
does not want
to be obliged to cudgel his brain at every
sentence."

It is generally held by the critics that the
descriptions
of Paris appended to each section of " Une Page
d'Amour "
are among the finest passages to be found in
the Rougon-
Macquart novels, But the present writer
after reperusing